



Note: New vendors and subcontractors must supply all of the required paperwork (Appendix-I, Financial Statement, and 3 Reference Letters), and must register in the Online Representations and Certifications Application (ORCA). In addition, all Vendors must also be registered in the CCR within 48 hours after bid opening or your company may be considered non-responsive.

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Marketing and
Regulatory
Programs

Agricultural
Marketing
Service

Washington, DC
20250

FV-320

Fruit and Vegetable Programs

Date Issued: August 21, 2008

Miscellaneous Products, Announcement FV-320, Invitation 047

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) invites offers to sell fresh sweet potatoes for processing as indicated below and per the Announcement for use in the Child Nutrition and other food domestic programs. **Offers are due by 1 p.m., Central Time, Friday, September 5, 2008.** Acceptances will be announced by midnight, Friday, September 19, 2008. Deliveries are to be made from November 16, 2008 through December 15, 2008.

Offers are invited from the trade for:

Fresh Sweet Potatoes for Processing Bulk 1,240,000 lbs

Note: Funds are not presently available for contracts awarded for FY 2009. The government's obligation for contracts issued is contingent upon the availability of appropriated funds from which payment for contract purposes can be made. No legal liability on the part of the Government for any payment that may arise until the funds are made available to the Contracting Officer for these contracts and until the Contractor receives notice of such availability, to be confirmed in writing by the Contracting Officer.

A specification for Sweet Potatoes for Processing is attached.

No offer will be made to 8(a) vendors on this invitation.

Bids must be submitted electronically via the Domestic Electronic Bid Entry System (DEBES) on the Internet. Offeror must be assigned a Logon ID by USDA to access the site. The Internet address is: <http://pcsd.usda.gov/debes> which translates into a connection of <https://pcsd.usda.gov:3077/mdbc1000.exe?> Once connected, follow the online procedures. A 'HELP' button provides detailed instructions for using the system or call 202-720-4517 for assistance.

Bidders are cautioned to bid only quantities they can reasonably expect to produce and deliver in accordance with the contract. Inquiries about Announcement FV-320, Appendix-1, the Commodity Specification for Miscellaneous Products dated June 2003, or this Invitation should be directed to the Contracting Officer, USDA/AMS/Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Commodity Procurement Branch STOP 0239, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20250-0239, telephone (202) 720-4517. An electronic version of this invitation can be obtained through the World Wide Web via the Commodity Procurement Home Page at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/cp>.


Purchases will be made on a delivered basis, subject to Announcement FV-320, to the listed locations. Delivery by trucks or railcars is optional to the contractor, except for those destination(s) which specify delivery by truck only or rail only.

ANNOUNCEMENT : FV320
 INVITATION : 047
 COMM GROUP : 89 BULK FRESH PROCESSING
COMM TYPE : 22 BULK FRESH SWEET POTATOES
PACK SIZE : 90 BULK

| ITEM NO | DESTINATION CITY | ST | TRANS RESTR | QUANTITY (LBS) | PRICE PER (LBS) |
|--|---------------------|----|----------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| SHIPPING PERIOD 11/16/08 - 11/30/08 | | | | | |
| 001 | PLOVER | WI | TRUCK ONLY | 600,000 | _____ |
| 002 | BOARDMAN | OR | TRUCK ONLY | 40,000 | _____* |
| 003 | CONNELL | WA | TRUCK ONLY | 120,000 | _____ |
| SHIPPING PERIOD 12/01/08 - 12/15/08 | | | | | |
| 004 | PLOVER | WI | TRUCK ONLY | 480,000 | _____ |

TOTAL QUANTITY FOR COMMODITY TYPE 1,240,000

TOTAL QUANTITY FOR INVITATION 1,240,000


 Felicitas Lofton
 Contracting Officer

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**REVISED SPECIFICATIONS FOR FRESH SWEET
POTATOES FOR PROCESSING**

1. **Grade** - U.S. No. 2 or better for Sweet Potatoes for Dicing or Pulping.
2. **Cured** – Applicant warrants sweet potatoes are cured according to standard curing procedures.
3. **Pack** – Bulk
4. **Crop Year** – The sweet potatoes shall be from the current packing season/crop year.
5. **Size** – Whole sweet potatoes shall be specified not less than 1.75 inches to 3.5 inches in diameter. Maximum diameter roots must pass freely through a 3.5 inch inside diameter tube.
6. **Varieties** – Beauregard or Covington. Varieties can not be mixed.
7. **Defects, Serious Damage, and Foreign Material:**
 - a. Sweet potatoes should be run on sizing and dirt removal belt prior to loading.
 - b. Any load of sweet potatoes found to contain broken glass or foreign substance, which may be harmful to health or adulterates the finished product, will be rejected.

8. **Domestic Product Requirement:**

Documentation is required to support the domestic origin of the product.

9. **Grading and Inspection:**

- a. Inspection must be performed by Federal, Federal-State, or Inspection Service.
- b. Product will be inspected as delivered at destination using one of the following methods:

Sampling Methods:

Sampling may be drawn either by hand or mechanical techniques

- a. Hand Sampling: Sample obtained by manually passing a tray through the flow of sweet potatoes by a USDA inspector or an approved sample puller. Sample puller may be a processor employee.

- b. Mechanical Sampling: Sample obtained mechanically by a trained and approved sample puller. (Federal Inspection Service must approve all mechanical samplers)

Samples may be graded individually or aggregated by either of the following

- a. Each truck load is graded and certified individually.
- b. Grading and certification can include that days run for individual growers and a single days harvesting from the same field for the individual grower constitutes a combined sample

Sampling Procedures:

- a. Samples should be representative of the load and the number of samples selected in accordance with USDA handbook instructions.
- b. Sampling is performed by either method a. or b. as identified in the Sampling Method above.
- c. Samples should be taken from the back, middle, and front of the truck as it is unloaded.
- d. After the sample is drawn, it is then carefully deposited in a sample bin(s). Sample slips/scale tickets bearing pertinent information are either inserted in the bin or attached to the outside of the bin.
- e. Sample bins are submitted for grading, where they are individually weighed and handled by machinery and dumped mechanically. This method helps to stabilize the accuracy and helps to eliminate bruises caused by handling of samples.

10. Invoices and Payment: Invoices and payment will be in accordance with Section X. Invoices and Payment, Announcement FV-320.

11. Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Handling Practices (GHP):

Vendors or its suppliers/subcontractors who are supplying fresh potatoes are required to undergo the USDA AMS FVP Fresh Products Branch GAP and GHP certifications process along with its Preventive Food Defense Procedures. GAP &GHP must be completed within 12 months or no later than 10 days prior to the first day of the contract delivery period. Vendors or its suppliers/ subcontractors must pass the minimum score of 80% for each of the following elements: House Packing; Storage and Transportation; and Traceback. A negative response to questions 1 and 2 in the “General Questions” section shall result in an automatic unsatisfactory rating. Failure to obtain GAP &GHP certifications within the prescribed timeframe will result in the bidder to be deemed non responsive, and the contract terminated for default. Brokers are exempt from this requirement.

The Fresh Produce Audit Verification Program can be accessed at the following website: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/fv/fpbgapghp.htm>

The audit tool is based on the Food and Drug Administration's *Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables* and is available at <http://vm.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/prodglan.html>.

For more information about the USDA GAP/GHP guidelines check the USDA website at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/fv/fpbgapghp.htm> or contact Kathy Staley, Head of the Fresh Products Branch's Field Operations Section at 800-811-2373.

13. In addition to the GAP/GHP requirements, all bidders, current and new, are also required to undergo an annual Food Defense System Survey as per Amendment No. 1 to FV320-CS1 dated July 26, 2007.